

good at all, and there is no use in wasting time in contending for them. PREACH THE WORD. PREACH THE WORD. And what have I often told you about advocating something that I never taught. In Gal. 1: 6-8, I have told you over and over again that 'I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would perfect the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' Now, will you take these things in your own hands and preach conditions to Christ's kingdom, which we never preached at all? Why, angels would not dare to do that under penalty of being accursed. So I warn you again—Preach the word, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Besides, you believe and preach that our Savior was all-wise; knew all things. Don't you know, he said when dying, 'It is finished,' and before he went to the cross, declared in a prayer to his Father—'I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do? In the face of all this, why act as though infinite wisdom and power did not do his work properly, and that he did not finish it? It seems incredible that weak, puny men as you are, with your narrow conceptions of the divine mind that you would insist so persistently that you could complete a work which the infinite, divine mind had failed to complete. You correct and amend a work which Christ failed to do! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves!'

No church can be properly organized that fails to recognize two very important principles of our model, namely, divinely appointed officers and divine law. Any other arrangement of course, has no scripture to sustain it, hence, is unscriptural.

In the early church at Jerusalem the apostles at first did all the work in caring for the body. But, "when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, "It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over *this business*." We pause to ask, over what business? They were not appointed merely over *business*, nor over *the business*, but over *this business*. Now, if the word *this*,

does not confine the work of deacons to a particular line, then words are no longer the signs of ideas. Here is the complaint made to the apostles; the trouble is specified just as clearly as language can make it, namely, *the widows, or the poor were neglected*. The apostles immediately add "Look ye out seven men whom we may appoint over *this business*; and yet, notwithstanding the plain duty of the deacons as set forth by inspired men, confusion worse than Babel exists concerning their work. One will teach that it is his duty to handle the finances of the church; another to administer the communion; another to adjust the trouble between brother A and brother B; another to visit the careless members and induce them to "come to meetin." Another to open the services with prayer and exhort if the preacher is not there. And the facts are that nine-tenths of this work is the business of the elder himself. What is the cause of this confusion? Manifestly, men are blindly after tradition, some creed or their own notions. There is no excuse for this contention. One careful reading of the Acts of the Apostles—the minister's hand-book sent from God, will tell us exactly what deacons were set apart to do. But, says one, I find that two of these seven were soon preaching, and does this not prove that deacons are to preach? No, it does not. It may be that the other five were carpenters; but does that prove that deacons are to be carpenters? What if two did become preachers? Does that change the work which these officers were set apart to do? Suppose these seven would have started out preaching and baptizing as many claim they were ordained to do how then would the complaint that the poor were neglected have been met? The complaint was that the apostles were preaching all the time and neglecting the poor. But was that complaint to be met by setting apart and ordaining more preachers? When Philip is alluded to by the Word, after he began preaching he is not called Philip the deacon, but *Philip the Evangelist*, as in Acts, 21: 8. Why, yes, deacons may become evangelists as well as other people if they develop their powers so they have the proper qualifications.

If there ever was a time when the deacon was needed it is now. The fact that his work goes by undone is the direct cause of the church losing its hold upon the masses. If those who need help received it as they should, Christ's body, the church, would be respected and honored to-day where it is scoffed at and even become a hissing by-word. In my humble judgment we can do nothing better to advance our cause by commanding respect

from the world at large than to give our deacons the scriptural charge of looking after the poor and then as overseers, seeing that they do so. We would thus answer half of our own prayers and enable God to work in us to do his will. Shall we do it?

But if our deacons are to be limited to administering to the wants of the poor, then who is to do the vast amount of other work which is continually accumulating in every congregation? Sure enough, who? There is brother A who will not speak to brother B who is one of our deacons. Brother C traded horses with neighbor Jones and Jones says he lied to him and did it, of course, to beat him. Now, Jones is counted a straight-forward, honest man and brother C's trade is injuring the church. Who is to look after it? The Sunday-school superintendent invited Miss D to play the organ; sister E has a daughter who can play, says that if superintendent Gunflint is going to run things, *she* is done. But she is not done because she calls Miss D bad names and causes a greater stir in that community than any two sermons which had ever been preached. Who is to look after this? Is sister E to go on in her mad career destroying herself and dragging many others down with her? In a vast majority of our congregations there is practically no one to oversee the flock. I do not hesitate to say that along this line we are not altogether apostolic. We are not following the divine model, nor listening to the divine law. How many places are there in our brotherhood where the muddy and foul stream of *bad influence* is allowed to flow on unceasingly until the entire stream is so polluted that it will scarcely sustain life. Whether it be the corrupt stream of ungodly and unrighteous lives of that bad teaching, its effect is the same—that of reducing the power of the body. I do not hesitate to say that nine-tenths of the demand, both present and past, for legislation arises from the want of local supervision. But there is no use in trying to purify the stream by damning it at its mouth. We must go to its sources—to its fountains and there turn the corrupt stream into its own outlet. No, my brethren, it is not legislation which we need; it is pure Gospel supervision and nothing else.

If we are going to have church trials with their juries, prosecutors and defenders, as some advocate, then it is high time that we be given some model because neither Christ nor his apostles ever conceived of such a thing. Gospel supervision deals with the dynamite in the stick, not with the explosion; it don't want any explos-